

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
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AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 3533

EO 11652GDS
TAGS: PINT, PL
SUBJ: DEMONSTRATIONS IN KRAKOW

REF: MEMORANDUM TO THE FILE MAY 9, 1977

1. SUMMARY: TENSIONS IN KRAKOW HAVE MOUNTED SINCE THE UNEXPLAINED DEATH OF WORKERS' DEFENSE LEAGUE SUPPORTER STANISLAW PYJAS ON MAY 7. MASSIVE DEMONSTRATIONS ON MAY 15 WERE CONDUCTED PEACEFULLY. THE SITUATION REMAINS UNSETTLED. END SUMMARY.

2. AN ESTIMATED 15,000 PEOPLE MARCHED ON THE NIGHT OF MAY 15 IN KRAKOW IN HONOR OF STANISLAW PYJAS, A FIFTH-YEAR STUDENT AT JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY AND AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE WORKERS' DEFENSE LEAGUE, WHO WAS FOUND DEAD ON MAY 7 FROM A BLOW TO THE HEAD. PYJAS WAS BURIED MAY 11. ABOUT 4,000 PEOPLE ATTENDED A REQUIEM MASS FOR HIM IN KRAKOW ON
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THE MORNING OF MAY 15. MANY STUDENTS ALSO BOYCOTTED THE ANNUAL JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENT FESTIVAL, THE JUVENALIA, WHICH WAS HELD OVER THE WEEKEND.

3. CONCERN OVER PYJAS'S DEATH WAS STIMULATED BY A WORKERS' DEFENSE LEAGUE STATEMENT OF MAY 9 WHICH SAYS THAT PYJAS, ALONG WITH FIVE COLLEAGUES, COMPLAINED TO POLICE

APRIL 26 ABOUT ANONYMOUS LETTERS SLANDERING PYJAS AND SAYING HE SHOULD BE "DONE AWAY WITH." THE LETTERS ALSO SAID THE SECRET POLICE WERE OUT TO GET THE STUDENTS WHO GATHERED SIGNATURES FOR A PETITION CALLING FOR A SEJM INVESTIGATION OF THE JUNE, 1976, DISTURBANCES. THE WDL STATEMENT REASSERTED THE RIGHT TO PETITION AND LISTED OTHER EXAMPLES OF ILLEGAL HARASSMENT OF WDL SYMPATHIZERS. A COPY OF THE STATEMENT IS BEING POUCHED TO THE DEPARTMENT, EUR/EE.

4. EXTRAORDINARY SECURITY PRECAUTIONS ACCOMPANIED THE WEEKEND DEMONSTRATIONS. POLICE SEIZED WDL LEADER JACEK KURON IN WARSAW AS HE WAS BOARDING A TRAIN FOR KRAKOW TO ATTEND THE REQUIEM MASS. POLICE SPOT-CHECKED CARS ON ALL THE MAJOR ROUTES LEADING TO KRAKOW. A WESTERN OBSERVER ESTIMATE THAT ON THE NIGHT OF MAY 15, HUNDREDS OF SECRET POLICEMEN LINED THE STREET DURING THE MARCH FROM THE HOUSE WHERE PYJAS'S BODY WAS FOUND TO THE WAWEL CASTLE. A KRAKOW OFFICIAL TOLD A CONSULATE OFFICER THAT A CONTINGENCY PLAN HAD BEEN PREPARED TO SEAL OFF KRAKOW FROM THE NEARBY STEEL COMPLEX OF NOWA HUTA. MORE THAN 40,000 BELIEVERS GATHERED THERE SUNDAY, MAY 15, FOR THE CONSECRATION OF THE FIRST CHURCH BUILT IN THAT DISTRICT. THE AUTHORITIES, HOWEVER, ACTED CAREFULLY, FEARING AN EXPLOSIVE SITUATION. CHURCH LEADERS WERE RESTRAINED IN THEIR REMARKS DURING THE NOWA HUTA CHURCH CONSECRATION. JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES PROVIDED BUSES FOR STUDENTS TO ATTEND PYJAS'S FUNERAL OUTSIDE OF KRAKOW IN AN EFFORT TO EASE TENSIONS.

5. WHILE THE DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE BEEN WITHOUT INCIDENT
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SO FAR, THE SITUATION APPARENTLY IS STILL TENSE. A STUDENT GROUP IN KRAKOW HAS ANNOUNCED IT WILL MILITATE FOR CREATION OF A NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATION BECAUSE THE EXISTING GROUPS HAVE LOST THEIR LEGITIMACY. STUDENTS ARE ANGERED BY SUCCESSIVE OFFICIAL EXPLANATIONS OF PYJAS'S DEATH: THAT HE DIED AS HE WAS TRYING TO ESCAPE HIS CLASSMATES THROUGH A WINDOW, AND THAT HE WAS DRUNK AND STRUCK HIS HEAD IN A FALL. AN ASSERTION IN TRYBUNA LUDU ON MAY 16 THAT A FEW "POLITICOS" ARE ATTEMPTING TO EXPLOIT HUMAN TRAGEDY FOR THEIR ALIEN POLITICAL GOALS IS LIKELY TO FUEL RESENTMENT.

6. COMMENT: THE EVENTS IN KRAKOW OVER THE WEEKEND DEMONSTRATE THE CONTINUING POTENTIAL FOR A DISRUPTIVE POPULAR OUTBURST. THE MAJOR PLAYERS EVIDENTLY RECOGNIZE THIS AND ARE DETERMINED TO PROCEED WITH RESTRAINT. PYJAS'S DEATH HAS STRENGTHENED THE WORKERS DEFENSE LEAGUE'S RATIONALE FOR CONTINUING ITS ACTIVITIES AT A TIME WHEN ITS ORIGINAL PURPOSE OF HELPING JOBLESS WORKERS WAS LOSING ITS RELEVANCE (REF MEMORANDUM). THE DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE SO FAR BEEN CONFINED TO KRAKOW, ALTHOUGH

WE HAVE HEAD FROM ONE CORRESPONDENT THAT MEMORIAL MASSES ARE PLANNED FOR LODZ AND OTHER CITIES. PYJAS'S DEATH IS AN ACUTE EMBARRASSMENT FOR THE AUTHORITIES. OFFICIAL ATTEMPTS TO EXPLAIN THE INCIDENT HAVE GIVEN RISE TO A RECURRENCE OF THE PERENNIAL RUMOR THAT "FORCES FROM THE EAST" MURDERED PYJAS TO CREATE TROUBLE FOR THE POLISH LEADERSHIP. WE HEARD THIS INTERPRETATION IN CONNECTION WITH TRAIN CRASHES IN THE FALL OF 1976 AND ARSON IN THE FALL OF 1975. WHILE MOST PEOPLE WE HAVE TALKED WITH ACCEPT THE GUESS THAT PYJAS WAS KILLED BY SECRET POLICE WHO PERFORMED THEIR ASSIGNMENT OF HARASSMENT TOO VIGOROUSLY, THE "EASTER" VARIANT EXPLAINS THE PERCEIVED FUTILITY OF THE MURDER AS WELL AS ITS POTENTIALLY DAMAGING IMPLICATIONS. END COMMENT.

DAVIES

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